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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/829,394

04/22/2004

Issei Harima

740630-77

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7590

05/31/2006

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EXAMINER

COLETTA, LORI L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3612

DATE MAILED: 05/31/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/829,394	Applicant(s) HARIMA ET AL.	
	Examiner Lori L. Coletta	Art Unit 3612	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 March 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 5-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 6-16 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 April 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1 Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McLeod et al 6,793,261 in view of Loveland 6,290,278.

Regarding claim 1, McLeod et al. '261 discloses a resin-made floor panel structure applied in a vehicle floor comprising a floor panel (18) made of a resin integrally forming a spare tire storage space, and a trunk board (44) made of resin disposed so as to cover the floor panel, wherein fitting parts are integrally formed in the floor panel and trunk board respectively so as to achieve the closure of the spare tire storage space in Figure 4.

However, McLeod et al. '261 does not show a peripheral wall of the spare tire storage space including an upwardly expanding tapered fitting part, and the fitting part of the trunk board has a taper to be engaged with the tapered fitting part.

Loveland '278 teaches a peripheral wall of the spare tire storage space including an upwardly expanding tapered fitting part, and the fitting part of the trunk board has a taper to be engaged with the tapered fitting part.

Regarding claim 1, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make resin-made floor panel structure of McLeod et al. '261 with a peripheral wall of the spare tire storage space including an upwardly expanding tapered

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fitting part, and the fitting part of the trunk board has a taper to be engaged with the tapered fitting part, as taught by Loveland '278, in order to provide easy removal of the trunk board.

Regarding claim 2, McLeod et al. '261, as modified, discloses the resin-made floor panel structure, wherein the trunk board has an engaging part for achieving the air tightness against the car body sidewall.

Regarding claim 3, McLeod et al. '261, as modified, discloses the resin-made floor panel structure comprising wherein the trunk board includes a first board part covering the spare tire storage space, a second board part having the engaging part and covering the portion excluding the spare tire storage space of the floor panel, and a hinge part rotatably coupling the second board part and first board part; and the hinge part is composed of a sound insulating flexible member, and is fixed between the both board parts without allowing gap.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claim 5 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 1-3 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

The cited references show several other resin-made floor panel structures similar to that of the current invention.

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6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lori L. Coletta whose telephone number is 571-272-6658.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:30am-4:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Dayoan can be reached on 571-272-6659. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Lori L. Coletta
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3612

llc
May 25, 2006